

mean what they say. There are Senators on both sides of the aisle who have had the courage to stand up for these important rules when we have been in the minority and when we have been in the majority. I don't have to remind the Senate that the previous President frequently harangued me to nuke the Senate. On every occasion, I had a one-word answer: No. No.

There are Senators on both sides who understand that any supposedly limited "carve-out" would bring the whole house crashing down. There are Senators on both sides who understand that the entirety of Federal law shouldn't go radically boomeranging back and forth every time the Senate narrowly changes hands.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior legislative assistant clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### REMEMBERING DR. JERALD F. COMBS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in eastern Kentucky, one man has been at the center of efforts to expand eye care for nearly 40 years. Dr. Jerald Combs, who passed away last month, played an instrumental role in modernizing and extending access to optometric care across Kentucky's Appalachian region. Today, I recognize Dr. Combs as an outstanding Kentuckian whose work made a vast impact on the lives of his patients.

When Dr. Combs began his practice in Martin, KY, in 1983, optometry in eastern Kentucky was an underdeveloped practice. Many residents lacked access to the eye care they needed, leaving far too many without good vision. Dr. Combs made it his mission to change that status quo and improved many lives in the process. His clinic served the entire eastern Kentucky region, attracting patients from far and wide who needed his care.

Perhaps Dr. Combs' greatest legacy will be his efforts to increase optometry training opportunities in his community. Because of his work in this area, the University of Pikeville named their college of optometry in his honor. The school's Jerald F. Combs Endowed

Scholarship gives students of all backgrounds the ability to study the subject, providing expertise to those who will stay in eastern Kentucky and help develop the field further.

Throughout his life, Dr. Combs was committed to serving his community and our Commonwealth and earned many awards for his efforts. The Kentucky Optometric Association lavished him with praise, granting him both their Optometrist of the Year Award and Distinguished Service Award twice. He also served as president and a board member of the association for many years. Outside of optometry, Dr. Combs helped his community through the Knott County Youth Foundation, the Knott County Little League, the Kiwanis Club, and the Hazard Lions Club. He served on the University of Pikeville Board of Trustees, steering the school to success.

I knew Dr. Combs personally and was saddened to learn of his passing last month. Few Kentuckians play as big or instrumental of a role in their community as he did. While we all mourn his loss, we can also be confident that his legacy, expanded access to eye care among Kentucky's most vulnerable communities, will last for many years into the future. I would like to express my personal gratitude for Dr. Combs' decades of service to the Commonwealth and encourage my Senate colleagues to join me in sharing condolences with the family, friends, and colleagues.

### RECOGNIZING OWENSBORO, THE "BLUEGRASS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, few Kentucky creations have had as much impact on American culture as Bluegrass music. It is the spring from which all other country music flows and one of our State's most world-renowned exports. Owensboro, KY, has played an important role in maintaining and promoting Bluegrass history, style, and heritage and, in recognition of that work, was recently named the Bluegrass Capital of the World. Today, I honor Owensboro for earning this title and helping preserve Kentucky's proud Bluegrass culture.

Owensboro's deep connection to Bluegrass music dates back to the genre's earliest days. Bill Monroe, widely recognized as the "Father of Bluegrass", was born just outside Owensboro in Ohio County, KY. His musical group, the Blue Grass Boys, adapted the unique style of music they found in Scotch-Irish communities in Kentucky's Appalachian foothills and popularized it for a mainstream audience. Listeners, entranced by Blue Grass Boys' soaring melodies, jaunty rhythm, and homespun style, started a craze for Bluegrass music that brought national fame to generations of Kentucky artists.

Owensboro's leaders have recognized their unique role in Bluegrass history

and sought to capitalize on that connection. City officials ushered in the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum in downtown Owensboro in 1991, inviting both tourists and locals to learn about and enjoy Bluegrass history. The city's annual "River of Music Party", or ROMP, welcomes more than 20,000 visitors to the banks of the Ohio River to celebrate Bluegrass artists and help sustain this proud Kentucky tradition. And just recently, Owensboro Mayor Tom Watson signed the official proclamation naming his city the Bluegrass Capital of the World, cementing Owensboro's important place in Bluegrass history.

Owensboro's leaders have also initiated a strong campaign to educate and popularize Bluegrass among the next generation of Kentuckians. The Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum features rotating exhibits highlighting key parts of Bluegrass history and hosts artists that promote the genre. The museum offers lessons in musical instruments like the mandolin, banjo, and fiddle, helping ensure the survival of their unique sounds and style. The museum's Bluegrass in the Schools program has introduced Bluegrass music to nearly 10,000 elementary students, including in 24 Owensboro-area schools, connecting young Kentuckians with their State's culture and history.

Bluegrass music is the soundtrack of Kentucky. From the first pluck of the banjo, strum of the guitar, or drone of the fiddle, the genre is immediately recognizable. Owensboro's leaders have done incredible, extensive work to preserve and promote this unique Kentucky music and are incredibly deserving of their city's recent designation as Bluegrass Capital of the World.

Mr. President, the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer highlighted the city's new title in a recent article. I ask unanimous consent the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer,  
Nov. 24, 2021]

#### BLUEGRASS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

The City of Owensboro has officially been designated the "Bluegrass Capital of the World" after more than a year of effort by the city and the Bluegrass Hall of Fame and Museum.

Mayor Tom Watson officially signed the proclamation permanently linking Owensboro and bluegrass music during a Nov. 12 ceremony at the Bluegrass Hall of Fame and Museum.

"About 15 months ago we started talking about this idea, and it has taken a little while to get it to this point, but we are here today to declare the City of Owensboro as the Bluegrass Music Capital of the World," Watson said during the event.

Watson called Chris Joslin, museum executive director, to the stage and asked him to turn around so he could officially sign the proclamation on his back, telling him, "a lot of this is going to be on your back."

"The idea is to create a sustainable structure and utilize our bluegrass music presence to build out economic development opportunities and increase tourism," Watson said.